



# City of Santa Barbara California

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**REPORT DATE:** August 31, 2005  
**AGENDA DATE:** September 8, 2005  
**PROJECT ADDRESS:** 601 Micheltorena Street-Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Foundation Workforce Housing Project (MST2003-00827)  
**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Planning Division, (805) 564-5470  
Jan Hubbell, Senior Planner  
Barbara Shelton, Environmental Analyst  
Irma Unzueta, Project Planner

### I. SUBJECT

Environmental hearing to receive public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Foundation Workforce Housing Project.

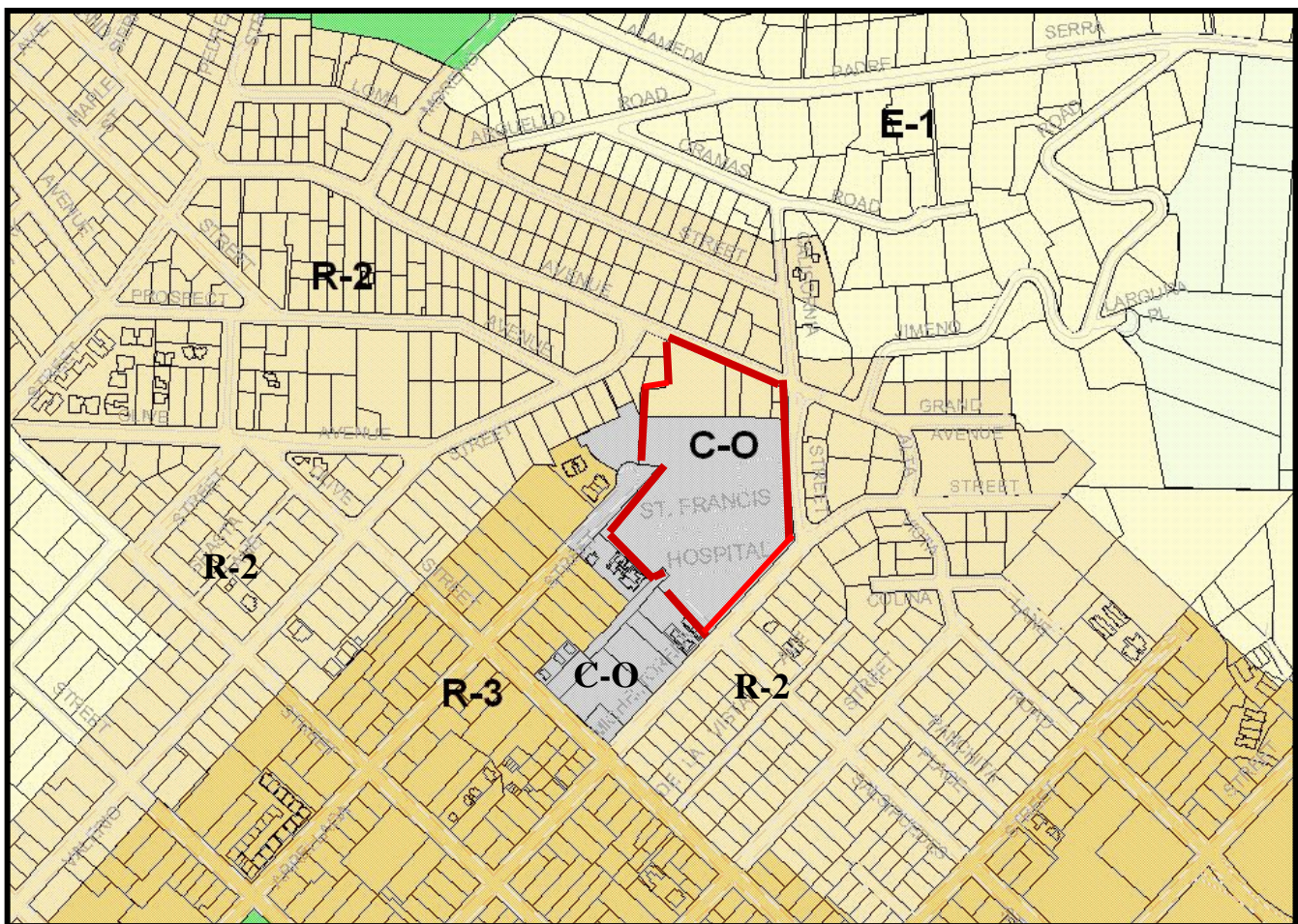
No action on the Draft EIR or project permit requests will be taken at this hearing. Written comments on the Draft EIR will be accepted through September 23, 2005.

### II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital Foundation Workforce Housing Project would demolish the existing St. Francis Hospital complex, including the main hospital, convent, central plant, and other ancillary structures, totaling approximately 189,000 square feet, and replace them with 115 residential condominiums that would cover 5.94 acres of the 7.39 acre site. The proposed mix of residential unit types is as follows: 10 one-bedroom units (approximately 704 square feet each), 65 two-bedroom units (approximately 1,154 – 1,240 square feet each), and 40 three bedroom units (approximately 1,306 – 1,480 square feet each). 81 of the units (70%) would be sold to Cottage Hospital employees at prices within the City's structure for affordable units and 34 units (30%) would be sold at market rates. Within the remaining 1.45 acres, the existing elderly care facility, Villa Riviera, would remain, but the parcel containing it would be adjusted to a size of approximately 31,500 square feet (0.73 acres). The remaining lands zoned R-2, Two Family Residential, would be re-configured into three (3) lots of approximately 10,500 square feet (0.24 acres) each and the two existing residences on these R-2 parcels would be demolished in the process. Although these R-2 lots have the potential for two residences on each lot, for a total of six residences, no development is proposed at this time.

Parking for the proposed Workforce Housing Project would be provided in accordance with Zoning Ordinance parking requirements. A total of 11 spaces would continue to be provided

for the Villa Riviera facility and 255 parking spaces would be provided for the 115 proposed condominium units. Vehicular access to the three reconfigured R-2 parcels would be provided directly from Grand Avenue. Primary vehicular access to the Villa Riviera and to guest parking for this facility would continue to be provided from an existing private driveway connecting to the terminus of Arrellaga Street; existing secondary access to the facility from Grand Avenue would also be maintained. Internal vehicular circulation for the new residential development would be provided by a system of private drives and public roads connecting to Micheltorena, California and Arrellaga Streets. Direct vehicular access to some of the parking structures on the site would also be provided from Micheltorena and California Streets.



**SANTA BARBARA COTTAGE HOSPITAL FOUNDATION  
WORKFORCE HOUSING PROJECT SITE**

### **III. DRAFT EIR ANALYSIS**

Environmental review of the proposed project is being conducted pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An Initial Study was prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the project. The Initial Study for the workforce housing project identified potential significant impacts that required further analysis in an environmental impact report (EIR). On July 29, 2004, the Planning Commission held an environmental

scoping hearing to further identify potential impacts to be included in the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR identified numerous mitigation measures to reduce significant impacts. For some issues, only partial mitigation was identified as feasible, and the following significant and unavoidable environmental effects (Class I Impacts) would result:

- **Short-Term Construction Noise** – Construction activities associated with the project would result in elevated noise levels in the project area that are substantially higher than existing conditions. Due to the large number of sensitive and other receptors in the project area and the prolonged 67- week duration of construction operations, construction related noise would remain significant and unavoidable after the implementation of proposed mitigation measures.
- **Cumulative Traffic** – This project, along with other projects, would result in a significant contribution to cumulative a.m. peak hour traffic volumes at the intersection of Mission Street/Bath Street. Even with the implementation of the shuttle program that would transport project residents between the project site and the Cottage Health Systems facilities, cumulative traffic impacts on this intersection would remain significant and unavoidable.

The proposed hospital project would also result in various significant, but mitigable, impacts (Class II Impacts). These include impacts to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geological hazards, hazardous materials, noise/vibration, solid waste, transportation circulation and parking, and water quality. The Draft EIR includes proposed mitigation measures to reduce these potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels.

The Draft EIR evaluates various alternatives to the proposed project to determine whether the project's significant impacts can be reduced or avoided, while substantially meeting the project objectives. The following alternatives are discussed in the Draft EIR:

- No Project Alternative
- Use Only Existing On-Site Buildings to Develop New Residences
- Project Redesign – Reduced Number of Units
- Mixed Use Development
- Environmentally Superior Alternative

These alternatives, which vary in terms of feasibility and their ability to meet project objectives, are discussed in Chapter 8.0 of the Draft EIR.

#### **IV. PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS**

The public review and comment period for the Draft EIR began on July 27, 2005, and has been extended through September 23, 2005. The purpose of the environmental hearing is to provide an opportunity to receive verbal comments from the public and Commissioners on the environmental analysis. No comment letters on the Draft EIR have been received to date.

Following the end of the public comment period on the Draft EIR, staff will consider all written

and public hearing comments, and will prepare a Final EIR, including written responses to comments, and any clarifications or revisions to the document analysis as needed. The proposed Final EIR will then be forwarded to the Planning Commission along with a Staff Report providing planning analysis of the project. At the subsequent Planning Commission hearing, the Commission will consider actions to certify the Final EIR and approve the requested discretionary applications for the project.

**V. RECOMMENDATION**

- A. Receive a Staff presentation outlining the environmental and public review process, and summarizing the project description and EIR analysis, and
- B. Hold a public hearing to receive public, agency, and Planning Commission comments on the Draft EIR.

**Exhibit:**

Draft EIR Volumes I and II – under separate cover (previously distributed to the Planning Commission) Available at the Community Development Department at 630 Garden Street, the Main Library at the corner of Anapamu and Anacapa Streets, and online at <http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Community/Planning/SBCH.htm>